



## MEETING MINUTES / 15 DECEMBER 2015

### ATTENDANCE:

Present: Sarg, Farley, Armbruster, Carroll, Corsa, Lardizzone, McMullen, Newman, Newstadt, Showell, and Weir. **78.5%**

Excused Absences: Seppala (Medical) and Smith (Medical)

Unexcused Absence: Hampton

Guests: Pat Cerchio-Vieira (1st State Military Women Warriors), Vivian Starnes (DAVA), Gary Morris (DelDOT), Dave Wilson (State Representative), Robert Wilson (First State Military Academy), Pat Gallucci (First State Military Academy), and Liz Byers (Operation Stand Down)

### CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS:

Acknowledged time for peace in our world, during this season.

### MEETING MINUTES:

A motion was made and the minutes were approved.

### ADMINISTRATIVE REMARKS:

#### Wilmington VAMC- Excused Absence:

#### Delaware Veterans Home (DVH) – Bill Peterson, Director:

Currently 141 residents, two recent deaths, and facility is at full capacity making it the largest nursing home in Delaware.

Approximately 300 persons attended the holiday social. The amount brought to light the need for a dining room expansion.

Seeking a bed expansion or securing adult day care.

Met with architects and discussed moving admin area, replacing with beds, then moving admin area to central location within facility.

- (Sarg) How many (veterans) are in the que?

96 are in the que (on waiting list) and eight will be reviewed during the next admission's meeting.

The Tele-Health system should be in place by September.

- (Newstadt) What is the possibility of another veterans home in New Castle?

If approved it would be a 10 – 15 year process. An adult day care agreement is a better model.

- (Carroll) Did you resolve the family admission concerns that were discussed during the last meeting?

Yes those concerns were resolved.

#### Home of the Brave, Director Jessica Finan:

There are presently 15 males and 5 females (w/o children).

Home Depot built a shed on the male facility property.

The female house build is stalled while the sprinkler system concerns are approved by the fire marshal.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

**Gary Morris, Departmental Commander MOPH**, presented a \$5K check to the DVTF on behalf of his organization.

**State Representative Dave Wilson** was in attendance and gave his support for the commission's work throughout the state. He also recommended speaking to the governor to address the commissioner reappointment/appointment issues.

**Colonel Robert Wallace and Commandant Pat Gallucci, First State Military Academy**

Gallucci:

The school, located in Clayton, has been operating for four months and the goal is to prepare students for future life. Students participate in two formations daily where they receive information. The school utilizes a new tech approach to learning. Students are taught how to work with others (Project Based Learning).

Wilson:

Likes the school's vision and teaches Marine Corps values (honor, courage, and commitment). Classroom commanders take control of their classroom. The school has 192 freshmen/sophomores and is one of only three like schools in the nation. Students remain in uniform during the school day and the color guard has been active within the community. There is a focus on discipline and while some students struggle, others get it.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS:**

DVTF 10 requests, 8 granted, \$3778.75 awarded, and \$62,006.99 balance.

House Bills 222 (Burial Eligibility) and 224 (Commission Composition) will be introduced during the next General Assembly

Commissioner Smith is having a medical procedure today and we need to keep him in our prayers.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:****Bear Veterans Memorial Cemetery, Commissioner Armbruster:**

Nothing to report.

**Millsboro Veterans Memorial Cemetery, Commissioner Corsa:**

Nothing to report.

**Legislative Affairs, Commissioner McMullen**

Asked the commission for legislative inputs and none were received.

Researching legislation for tax credit for disabled veterans.

Will pursue legislation adding veteran status on drivers licenses.

Will pursue legislation requiring health care facilities to ask patients, "if they are a veteran," this will ensure correct receipt of benefits.

**Commemorative Affairs, Commissioner Showell**

Received positive feedback on the Veterans Day events.

**ORGANIZATIONAL REPORTS:**

Commissioner McMullen (AFSA)

Dressed up as Santa for a Dover AFB holiday event.

MSgt Schwally (Bridge emcee) was elected president of the Dover AFB organization chapter.

Commissioner Armbruster (AL)

The National Commander will visit Delaware in March.

Commissioner Weir (AMVETS)

Performed chaplain duties for a veteran's interment (without family) at the Millsboro Cemetery.  
Assisted with the Sussex Veteran's Court and is sponsoring a veteran.

Commissioner Smith (Del Vets)

Not present.

Commissioner Lardizzzone (DAV)

Due to the Dover Veteran's Day Parade success, the city is seeking DCVA assistance for next year.  
The DAV receive \$50K for veterans' Quality of Life programs.

Commissioner Newstadt (JWV)

No report.

Commissioner Farley (MCL)

Please support Toys for Tots throughout Delaware. The program will support 700 families.  
The Dover Homeless Veteran goal is to house 50 veterans, the current number is 47.

Chairman Sarg (MOAA)

Attended the Wilmington VAMC Town Hall. Met the new "interim" regional (Philadelphia) executive director.  
Concerned that the interim title will limit patient care initiatives.  
Sent out Choice Program changes.  
Organization is appealing the Widow's Tax goal.  
Attended Give Veterans a Smile Program teleconference. Program will assist Delaware veterans in need of dental care.

Commissioner Carroll (MOPH)

Laid WW II wreath during Dover Wreaths Across America event.  
William Jackson, Baltimore VAMC, is covering the MOPH veteran service officer billet. He is working at the Wilmington VAMC Benefits Office until a replacement is found.

Commissioner Seppala (MOWW)

Not present.

Commissioner Newman (VFW)

Visited hospitalized veterans and those at the DVH.  
On 17 December the Red Cross is hosting a Mental Health awareness event for Dover AFB family members.  
On 23 January the Arctic Blast (ocean dunk) will take place to bring awareness to veterans mental health issues.

Commissioner Corsa (VVA)

On 10 December worked with service organizations, at Ocean View VFW, to hear veteran concerns about the proposed Sussex CBOC. Drew Slater chaired the event and showed a genuine concern for the issues brought forward.

Commissioner Showell (At Large)

The National Guard holiday concerts went well.  
On 9 January there will be a National Guard Senior Leader Conference at Dover Downs beginning at 0700.  
Army aviators are returning from deployment and a recognition event will be scheduled.

Commissioner Hampton (At Large)

Not present.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**POW/MIA Chair of Honor at DCVA (OPEN)**

Director Kirby will meet with Mr. Carter to arrange Department of Corrections chair refurbishing.

**Public University “Course Scheduling Preference” (OPEN)**

Commissioner Armbruster has been unable to contact Delaware State University and Goldey-Beacom. Recommend scheduling a meeting with all university/college veteran service representatives and the commission to discuss veteran educational needs.

**Recognition for Sen. Ennis/Rep. Jaques (OPEN)**

The plaque were ordered and will be presented during the holiday party.

**Departmental/State Listing due to Sable today (OPEN)**

Chairman Sarg reminded commissioners to submit this data.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Nothing presented.

**ITEMS FOR THE GOOD AND WELFARE OF THE ORGANIZATION**

Commissioner Newstadt recommended that previous commissioners be invited to commission social events. The other commissioners agreed so the invitations will occur for future events.

**NEXT MEETING:** **Tuesday, 19 January 2016 at 10:00 AM**

**LOCATION:** **802 Silver Lake Blvd, Suite 100, Dover, DE**